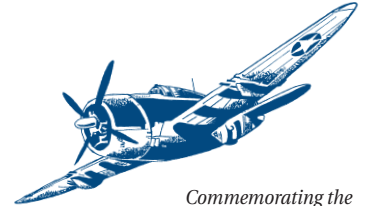


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Commemorating the
P-47 THUNDERBOLT

Millville Army Air Field Museum

PRESERVING MILLVILLE'S UNIQUE WWII AVIATION HISTORY
HONORING VETERANS • EDUCATING YOUTH • PROMOTING AVIATION — PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 14, 2020

Calling all veterans...

Area veterans and community invited to Millville Executive Airport for the MAAFAM's 19th Annual Veterans Appreciation Day *Covid-19 safety measures will be in place*

MILLVILLE, NJ: Things will be a little different this year as the Millville Army Air Field Museum (MAAFM) pays tribute to our nation's veterans on Saturday, November 7, 2020, from 10am to 2pm at the museum's 19th annual **Veterans Appreciation Day** at Millville Executive Airport. **All veterans are invited to attend and be honored.** The event is free of charge and open to the public.

"The museum is proud to once again salute America's veterans at our special commemorative event" says Lisa Jester, MAAFAM executive director. "But this year, there will be some significant differences. We will have all Covid-19 safety measures in place to ensure the safety of our guests and volunteers. This will include temperature and mask checks at the door for those entering the museum, along with capacity limits. For the outdoor ceremonies which begin at 11am, seating will be distanced and we ask everyone to dress accordingly for weather.

"Included in our outdoor commemorative ceremony will be the debut of the museum's C-47 Nose Restoration, honoring the history of the C-47 Skytrain during World War II, and an unveiling of the museum's newest mural documenting gunnery practice while recognizing the role of the B-26 Marauder in air-to-air gunnery training at the Millville Army Air Base during the war."

Guest speaker for this year's event is Bob Dalessandro, of Woodbury, NJ, a U.S. Army veteran who will relate some of the interesting and important history of the C-47 Skytrain during the war. The museum's C-47 nose will honor Bob's father, 2nd Lt. Anze Dalessandro, a Skytrain pilot; and all those who served in the 436th Troop Carrier Group of the 9th Air Force out of Western Europe.

Expected to attend are Col. Michael Peeler, the current 436th Operations Group commander – 18th Air Force 436th Airlift Wing stationed at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware.

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**Area veterans and community invited to Millville Army Air Field Museum's
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Also highlighting the Veterans Appreciation Day event will be the unveiling of the latest mural documenting the important World War II history that took place at the Millville Army Air Base. The MAAFM *Gunnery Practice Mural* will recognize the B-26 Marauder aircraft and its role in air-to-air gunnery training for P-47 Thunderbolts that took place at the Millville Air Field from 1943 to 1945, preparing pilots for missions overseas in the European Theatre.

Special visitors expected for the unveiling of this mural, which is located on historic building 31 on Peterson Street, are World War II veterans who served at Millville — George Washington Whitehouse, 100 years young, flight engineer for the B-26 Marauder, from Emmaus, Pennsylvania, and 96-year-old Charles “Ozzie” Osborne, P-47 pilot, from Laurel Springs, NJ.

“We are very honored to have both George Whitehouse and Charles Osborne attend this special mural unveiling,” says Robert Trivellini, MAAFM vice president, “and we thank them for their input in its creation.”

The mural was designed and produced by Sam Donovan, mural artist, from Woodstown, NJ, who also created the *Wall of Remembrance Mural* on Millville City Hall and several other murals located in the historic complex of the museum at Millville Executive Airport — each mural documenting a specific aspect of the World War II history of the Millville Army Air Field — America’s First Defense Airport.

Funding for the new *Gunnery Practice Mural* project was made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Cumberland County Board of Chosen Freeholders through the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission.

The museum expects a number of area World War II veterans and their families to attend. Along with them, veterans of all American conflicts and peacetime servicemen and women are invited and encouraged to be part of this special day. Displays on the museum grounds include military vehicles, a U.S. Navy A-4 Skyhawk, the U.S. Army C-23 Short Sherpa, and the restored original Millville Air Base fire truck.

The 11am ceremony will include a presentation of the colors by Semper Marine Detachment 205 of Vineland, and a musical salute to veterans. Prayers will be offered for veterans both alive and deceased. In commemoration, there will be a wreath laying and moment of silence.

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“On behalf of the Millville Army Air Field Museum, we are honored to commemorate our veterans and remind people of the important history that took place here during WWII,” adds Lisa Jester. “We are very proud to present our Veterans Appreciation Day to the public each year. Together we recognize and honor the valuable role of all America’s veterans and thank them for their many contributions and sacrifices.”

The day’s activities feature a FREE ‘Canteen’ lunch for all visitors, sponsored by Verna’s Flight Line Restaurant and Catering, that donates all of the food for the event. Special thanks to Verna’s Flight Line; to Bottino’s ShopRite and Angelic Health for donating desserts and beverages; and to South Jersey Paper Products for donating paper products. Event activities will continue through 2pm, the museum is open until 4pm.

***For more information contact Lisa Jester, MAAFM executive director, at (856) 327-2347
or e-mail ljester@p47millville.org***

The Millville Army Air Field Museum (MAAFM) preserves the history of the Millville Army Air Field, which was “America’s First Defense Airport,” dedicated by the United States War Department in 1941. Located in the original WWII Base Headquarters Building, the Museum displays a large collection of WWII aviation artifacts of local and national interest. It recognizes the more than 10,000 men and women who served at Millville during WWII, including 1,500 pilots who received advanced fighter training in P-47 ‘Thunderbolt’ and P-40 ‘Warhawk’ fighter planes. The Museum recognizes all aspects of aviation history through its displays, community events, and educational programs. The MAAFM is open Tuesday through Sunday, 10am to 4pm, with Covid-19 safety measures in place. Mondays by appointment.

Millville Army Air Field Museum's 19th Annual Veterans Appreciation Day

Saturday, November 7, 2020

10am to 2pm

Program

10am Museum Opens

- Donuts and a hot cup of coffee will be available in the museum courtyard.
- Veterans will be available in the museum throughout the day to relate their experiences.

11am Veteran Tribute Ceremony in the museum courtyard

(between the museum building and the Wyble Research Library, weather permitting)

Debut of the C-47 Nose Restoration

Unveiling of the new WWII Gunnery Practice Mural

12 noon to 2pm

- FREE Canteen Lunch for veterans and all visitors

The museum will remain open until 4pm.

Photos from the 2019 Veterans Appreciation Day at Millville Executive Airport



Semper Marine Detachment 205 of Vineland presented the colors for more than 250 visitors to Veterans Appreciation Day at Millville Executive Airport in 2019.



WWII veterans Owen Garrison (seated) of Bridgeton, NJ, and John Quinesso of Vineland, NJ.

Photos from the 2019 Veterans Appreciation Day at Millville Executive Airport



Carrying the commemorative wreath forward at the Veterans Appreciation Day ceremony in 2019 were World War II veterans (left to right) John Quinesso, Mike Jordan and John Bernardini, all from Vineland, NJ, Looking on from the left: World War II veteran Owen Garrison from Bridgeton, NJ.



Millville High School student re-enactors with WWII veterans in 2019. Left to right: Autumn Craig, Cecely Dominguez, Walter Kocielski; Angelina Smith and Owen Garrison.

Photos from the 2019 Veterans Appreciation Day at Millville Executive Airport



World War II veterans and Millville High School student re-enactors at Veterans Appreciation Day 2019



World War II veterans saluted by members of the Cumberland Civil Air Patrol at Veterans Appreciation Day 2019.